

APPENDIX 10

Seven Lakes Incommon Allotment

Sheep and cattle are presently authorized to graze in what is named the Seven Lakes incommon allotment. This allotment is an unfenced area of approximately 600,000 acres, traditionally a winter sheep area, which includes the Stewart Creek and Cyclone Rim allotments of the proposed action as well as portions of two additional grazing allotments (Green Mountain and Arapahoe Creek). Map 2-19 shows the relative locations of these allotments.

Twenty-one livestock operations (seven cattlemen and fourteen sheepmen) hold grazing privileges in the Seven Lakes incommon allotment (Table 2-35).

The existing Seven Lakes incommon allotment is a vast area (roughly 25 miles north to south and 45 miles east to west) that is virtually without interior fencing. Livestock operators are not restricted to specific areas within the allotment. These situations have made effective livestock grazing management extremely difficult for livestock operators and BLM. Some cattle operators experience difficulty in keeping track of the whereabouts of their stock, and BLM personnel have difficulty with use supervision. Some unauthorized livestock grazing takes place, but exactly how much is not known.

It is estimated that 30 percent of the existing active licensed cattle use occurs in the area of the proposed Cyclone Rim allotment and 10 percent is estimated to be used in the location of the proposed Stewart Creek allotment. The remaining 60 percent of the active licensed cattle use in the Seven Lakes incommon allotment is taken outside the ES area.

The Seven Lakes incommon allotment suffers from the problem of summer cattle drifting into it from its neighboring allotment to the north (Green Mountain). There are no data showing the magnitude of the drift problem, but it is estimated that cattle drift adds 30 percent more use (3,077 AUMS) above the total licensed use in the Seven Lakes incommon allotment. Above and beyond the drift from Green Mountain, trespass is a serious problem in the Seven Lakes allotment. Several users have indicated trespass sheep and cattle can frequently be found in the allotment. One trespass action was pursued by BLM in 1976.

Both cattle and sheep use this allotment, with the majority of use by sheep. During the past 10 years, the trend has been that many of the established sheep operators are going out of business or desire to change their operations to run cattle. Subsequently, they have taken about 66 percent nonuse (35,158 AUMS) annually (Table 1-1). All livestock operators who use the Seven Lakes incommon allotment use it to complement their livestock operations on other BLM grazing allotments, U.S. Forest Service lands, state grazing leases, and/or private lands.

The seasonal patterns of grazing by livestock are based on the operators' historical use and desires rather than on physiological needs of plants and range readiness criteria. Cattle use is taken from May 1 to December 31. Sheep use is yearlong, but most is taken from October to May.

In the Seven Lakes ES area, excluding the Ferris allotment, an estimated use of 4,460 cattle AUMs and 18,101 sheep AUMs is made each year. This estimate was based on the licensed active use in the Seven Lakes incommon allotment and the amount of unauthorized use believed to be drifting into the allotment (Appendix B-2-15 and B1-3).

One rancher has requested that some of his use be changed from winter sheep to winter cattle. Cattle are presently found during the winter in allotments adjacent to and south of the Seven Lakes ES area; nevertheless, winter weather makes winter cattle operations risky ventures. At times, bulldozers have been needed to rescue bands of sheep from winter snows. Riddle and Oakley (1972) reported that a 1971 blizzard in the Seven Lakes ES area lasted 4 days, covered 18 inch tall sagebrush with snow, and was immediately followed by over 2 weeks of subfreezing temperatures and ground blizzards.

Bad winters resulting in unusually high livestock mortality apparently hit about every 20 years-1927, 1949, 1971 (personal communication, Bernard Sun 1977). Table 1-1 and Figure 1-1 show the large amount of cattle nonuse that followed the most recent bad winters, those of 1971-1972 and 1972-1973.

The Seven Lakes incommon allotment was adjudicated in 1958. The major problems associated with the adjudication were that no forage was reserved for wild horses, no season of use or class of livestock was specified, and no consideration of the area's suitability for grazing was made. Presently, cattle concentrate around the limited watering sites, leaving much of the allotment ungrazed.

APPENDIX 10, continued
TABLE 1-1
PRESENT CLASS AND FEDERAL AUMS OF
LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS IN EIS AREA

Operations	Present Class	Present Qualifications (AUMs)
FERRIS COMMON ALLOTMENT		
A	Sheep	1,023
B	Sheep	1,763
C	Sheep	1,245
D	Sheep	746
E	Sheep	155
F	Sheep	532
G	Cattle	165
H	Cattle	176
Wyoming Game & Fish Commission	Sheep	11,000*
		Total Cattle = 341 AUMs Total Sheep = 6,464 AUMs
SEVEN LAKES INCOMMON ALLOTMENT**		
A+++	Cattle	529
B+++	Cattle	2,661
C+++	Cattle	662
D+++	Cattle	530
E+++	Cattle	3,280
F+++	Sheep	5,714
G	Cattle	1,836
H	Cattle	758
I	Sheep	2,618
J	Sheep	16,809
K	Summer Sheep	1,000
L	Sheep	3,340
M	Sheep	4,375
N	Sheep	3,602
O	Sheep	1,455
P	Sheep	1,253
Q	Sheep	1,144
R	Sheep	2,423
S	Sheep	7,651
T	Summer Sheep	951
U	Sheep	1,142
Wyoming Game & Fish Commission	Sheep	4,341*
		Total Cattle = 10,256 AUMs Total Sheep = 57,818 AUMs

*Reserved for wildlife.

**The existing Seven Lakes incommon allotment is a large grazing allotment which includes all of the proposed Cyclone Rim allotment, most of the proposed Stewart Creek allotment, as well as significant portions of the Green Mountain allotment and the Arapahoe Creek allotment which lie outside the ES area (refer to Map 2-19).

+++These operations would take their use outside the ES area once the proposed action is implemented.